

Drive Time -- Safety Tips for VT Drivers

Information, tips and reminders from those who work to keep Vermont drivers safe –

VT State Police, VT Department of Motor Vehicles, VT Agency of Transportation, VT Sheriffs Association. and the AARP Driver Safety Program.

Distracted driving: a deadly epidemic

April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, because despite widespread prevention efforts, distracted drivers are still causing far too much death and destruction, including 24% of major crashes on Vermont highways. All use of handheld electronic devices while driving is illegal here. And smart Vermonters know that's not the only distraction to avoid, because while tickets are expensive, the tragic consequences of a crash can be devastating. Driving requires our full attention, and these tips can help:

- Silence phones and keep them in a secure spot out of reach to avoid temptation. Never make or answer calls or texts; even hands free calling is a distraction. Pull over or have a passenger handle any urgent calls.
- Preset radio stations and other entertainment choices; keep volume low enough so sirens and other warnings can be heard.
- Avoid eating or drinking while driving, but if you must, make sure food and drinks are secure and can be reached without looking away from the road.
- Assign navigation duties to a passenger or consult maps or GPS in advance.
- Find glasses or sunglasses, adjust mirrors and make sure everyone is buckled up before starting out.
- Make sure children are secure in safety seats, have everything they need, and understand appropriate vehicle behavior.
- Avoid personal grooming, smoking, reading, knitting or other distracting activities while you're driving.
- Make sure pets are buckled up or in a carrier.
- If you feel drowsy or find your attention wandering, pull over and take a break.
- Stow your stuff securely to avoid being distracted by falling items such as a wallet, briefcase or groceries in a sudden stop.

Distracted driving is a deadly epidemic, and we can be the cure by making our own responsible choices behind the wheel.